

*Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park
Park Advisory Commission Meeting*

September 21, 2006

Warren County Government Center
Front Royal, Virginia

Agenda

- I) General Introductions
- II) Review and Approval of Minutes from 20 July 2006 (10 minutes)
- III) Election of Commission Chair (10 minutes)
- IV) GMP Status Update (10 minutes)
- V) GMP alternative concepts; presentation and discussion – Michael Clarke, Wallace Roberts & Todd (90 minutes)
- VI) Presentation from Department of Interior Solicitor on federal advisory commissions and bylaws [speaker invited but not yet confirmed] (60 minutes)
- VII) Old Business
- VIII) New Business
- IX) Election of Vice-Chair in November
- X) Next Meeting – 16 November 2006 in Strasburg

Meeting Notes

Commission members in attendance: Diann Jacox, Designated Federal Official (DFO); Mary Bowser, Chairperson; Elizabeth McClung; Richard Kleese; Howard Kittell; Gene Dicks; Jim Smalls; Randolph Jones; Patrick Farris; Fred Andreae; Dan Stickley

Commission members absent: Kris Tierney; Roy Downey; Gary Rinkerman;

Others in attendance: Chris Stubbs, NPS; Michael Clarke, WRT; Wendy Hamilton, Preserve Frederick; Hale Hawbecker, Dept. of Interior; Robert King, Northern Virginia Daily; John Hornick, Shenandoah Long Rifles; Kevin Seabrooke, the Warren Sentinel

Chairperson Mary Bowser chaired the meeting.

The notes from the 20 July 2006 meeting were reviewed and approved as written.

The vote for the Commission Chairperson for the 2006-2007 season was held. Three nominations were received by the National Park Service, all for Mary Bowser. A voice vote was held, and Dr. Bowser was elected for a second term by unanimous vote, with one abstention. During the November 2006 meeting, the Commissioners will vote for a Vice Chairperson.

Mr. Chris Stubbs of the National Park Service provided a general management plan status update to the Commission, the details of which were handed out to the Commissioners and the public.

There was a presentation from Mr. Stubbs on the park's draft Foundation Plan. This document is a formal statement of the core mission of the Park, provides basic guidance for decision making, and is the first step toward GMP planning. Mr. Stubbs encouraged all Commissioners to send him their comments on the draft foundation plan. After the presentation, there was a short discussion on the foundation plan which is documented in the appendix to these notes.

There was a presentation from Mr. Michael Clarke from the consulting firm Wallace Roberts & Todd on GMP conceptual alternatives, then there was a facilitated discussion on the topic. A summary of this presentation and the discussion that occurred during the presentation are appended to these commission notes.

There was a presentation and a Q&A session with Hale Hawbecker, Dept. of Interior Solicitor, on federal advisory commissions and bylaws. The following summarizes the main points of Mr. Hawbecker's talk:

- In his observation, the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove NHP Commission is collegial and functioning well.
- There are some problems with the version of the bylaws submitted by the Commission – it would be better to use the version provided by the Dept. of Interior.
- There are problems with using Roberts Rules of Order to run meetings. The Department prefers that meetings are run by consensus and that voting is only held for basic things like approving meeting minutes. The “consensus process” is much better for providing advice, which is the role of the Commission.
- If the Commission is to have bylaws, they should be simple. “If you build yourself a box, then you have to stay in that box.” Complex bylaws can lead to successful legal challenges.
- Regarding Commission procedures, Mr. Hawbecker reminded the group that handouts and e-mails shared regarding Commission business are public documents and are available to the public. Do not send any e-mails that you do not want seen by the public.
- Commission subcommittee work is not subject to public scrutiny until it is presented to the full Commission.
- It is okay for the Commission to conduct business between meetings via e-mail and subcommittees, but no final decisions should be made.
- Regarding the Commission's authority to hold hearings and take public input, any such meetings must comply with the Federal Advisory Committee Act and all of the regulations that implement the Act. For example, the meetings must be open to the public, advertised in the Federal Register, etc.

Under new business, there was an announcement that the Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation and Belle Grove would be hosting the 2006 battle reenactment during the

weekend of Oct. 21-22. Also, gratitude was expressed to Commissioner Patrick Farris for providing the room and refreshments for the meeting today.

The next meeting will be on 16 November 2006 at the Strasburg Town Hall.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned by Chairperson Bowser.

List of handouts provided at 20 July 2006 meeting

1. Meeting agenda
2. Minutes from 20 July 2006 Commission meeting
3. GMP status update
4. Bylaws from the Dept. of the Interior
5. Draft Foundation Plan (6 September 2006 Version)
6. Draft Conceptual Alternatives matrix

Appendix I – Discussion of Draft Foundation Plan (6 September 2006 Version)

Significance Statement #1:

- We should add people and the social history of the battle to this concept (e.g., the Ramseur story).
- Civilian farms were important.
- Military camp life was important.

Significance Statement #2:

- This statement is too complex.
- We should not include the pre-historic in this statement.
- Antebellum is generally considered to be the time period between the Revolutionary and Civil Wars – is this what we mean?

The Native American story seems not to be adequately covered in the Foundation Plan. Native American land use may have modified the landscape to such an extent that it impacted Euro settlement of the Valley. Also, the Valley Pike was originally a Native American route, and there are Native American stories at Harmony Hall.

In terms of antebellum history, both the Bowmans and Hites were involved in the Revolutionary War.

Appendix I – Discussion of Alternative Concepts

Michael Clarke from WRT gave a presentation on GMP decision points and potential alternative concepts. A handout was provided to the Commissioners with these potential concepts. Following is the major discussion points:

- Concepts A and B seem too dichotomous – could they create dissension among the partners and the public? Perhaps it would be better to combine A & B into one alternative. A & B seem to polarize the issues unnecessarily. Organizing the alternatives by themes will likely be divisive – probably the internal logic should not be thematically based.
- NPS needs a role in protecting resources – Alt. C is a “straw man” that simply won’t work. One of the primary reasons the Park was created was so that NPS would help protect and preserve resources of the area.
- One idea is to collapse A & B, keep some version of C, and include the No-Action alternative.
- B seems to encapsulate the stories that are within A.
- Another idea is to look at the Park as a model of stewardship of green and open space and land conservation – this could be an alternative, or a paradigm for how to view the alternatives.
 - Aggressive resource protection
 - Park is a forum and model for how private land owners and nonprofits can protect land and be good stewards
 - People can come to NPS for help and assistance in land protection and conservation
 - Would have a “green” visitor center
 - Heritage would be preserved
 - NPS and partners would have a contemporary role in heritage preservation
 - Focus would be preservation and conservation
 - “Explain the past; preserve the future.”
 - Park could have a learning center for resource stewardship
 - But, would you lose some of the “storytelling” aspect of park management?
- Another possible paradigm: preserving the heritage of the Park and the Valley vs. telling the story of the Park and the Valley.
- We cannot lose the Civil War component of the park – this is what originally brought all the partners to the table and brings national support and funding.
- Another possible paradigm: the “leaf” vs. the “onion” analogy for looking at history; or, viewing history vertically vs. horizontally. You can either look at the sites and resources as they exist now and interpret that, or you can peel back the onion to look at successive, multiple layers of history at each site. Blandy Farm is an example, with their different types of self guided tours (Boxwood tour, nature walk, conifer tour, etc.)
 - But, what would be the differences in how we manage the park under this paradigm?
- The Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation plan focused their alternatives around “how” to provide visitor services, not “what” to manage (i.e., visitor center options, etc.).
- Should we organize the alternatives around the management structure of the park?
- We could organize around delivery of visitor services – how visitors interact and where they go.
- Stewardship and conservation was why the National Park Service was originally asked to be a partner.